

Falkland Islands NEWSLETTER



December 1981 No 11

EDITORIAL

This issue highlights recent events which reveal impending trouble for the Falklands. Her Majesty's Government have forced through legislation giving many Islanders second class British citizenship.

HMS Endurance, guardship of the Islands and the only Royal Naval presence in the South Atlantic, is to be withdrawn in early 1982 to the accompaniment of cheers from the Argentine press. Meanwhile, the Argentine Foreign Affairs Ministry has demanded a resumption of talks and a quick settlement of her claim to sovereignty.

Not unnaturally, these events have been reflected in a hardening of attitude by Islanders, most of whom categorically reject the lease-back proposal and feel that the British Government should adopt a more robust stand over their rights and heritage.

Islanders are well aware that this could lead to a period of hardship with pressures applied by Argentina. However, many believe that short-term suffering may lead to long-term political stability, which is a prerequisite economic growth and foreign investment. This is the time for decision.

MPs visit the Falklands

Mr Eric Ogden MP for Liverpool, West Derby and Mr Michael Shersby MP for Uxbridge visited the Falkland Islands for two weeks in September on a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association visit.

They visited Stanley and camp and met many Islanders. Mr Ogden is a member of the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee.



Miss Sukey Cameron presents a petition signed by nearly all voters in the Falkland Islands asking the Prime Minister to grant full citizenship to more than 300 Islanders. The petition was acknowledged but Islanders lost their full citizenship under the new Nationality Act.

CHANGE-OVER AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE

In the September Cabinet reshuffle, Hon Nicholas Ridley MP, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and responsible for the Falkland Islands, was appointed to the Treasury as Financial Secretary. He had held the Foreign Office post since May 1979 and visited the Falkland Islands in November 1980.

His replacement as Minister of State is Mr Richard Luce MP who had previously held the appointment of Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Mr Luce has been the Member of Parliament for Shoreham in Sussex since 1971. He went to the Falkland Islands on a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association visit in the same year.

Islanders at talks

The Falkland Islands Legislative Council has agreed to send two representatives to the new talks between Argentina and Britain on the political and economic future of the Islands.

Earlier, the Argentine foreign minister Oscar Camillion had said that the Islanders would not be consulted in any future 'negotiations'.

"We are committed to respecting the interests of the Islanders", he told the Buenos Aires Herald, but did not "consider that they should have the right to veto in a negotiation between Argentina and Great Britain".

Senor Camillion described his discussions with Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, at the UN General Assembly:

"There is a totally clear understanding that the current situation as regards the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) cannot continue any longer and that the time has come to negotiate".

The last round of talks took place in New York during February 1981, when Mr Nicholas Ridley MP, then Minister of State at the Foreign Office, led a delegation including Falkland Islands Councillors. At that time, the Islanders proposed a freeze on all sovereignty negotiations. This was rejected outright by the Argentines and the talks ended without any results.

In any new talks between Britain and Argentina, the attitude of newly elected Falkland Islands Legislative Councillors will show through.

Argentines hail withdrawal of HMS Endurance

Islanders are also convinced that the British Government is not taking account of the massive economic potential of the waters surrounding the Falkland Islands, where there are vast fish stocks (currently being depleted by Iron Curtain and Japanese vessels) and known hydrocarbon resources.

HMS "Endurance"

18. Sir Nigel Fisher asked the Secretary of State for Defence if he will reconsider the withdrawal of HMS "Endurance" from its duties in the Falkland Islands and the Antarctic.

Mr. Blaker: No.

A peremptory ministerial response to one of many MPs concerned about HMS ENDURANCE.

"Next year the British Navy will give up vigilance over the Falklands and Antarctic Territories claimed by that country when the patrol ship Endurance goes . . ."

Thus the British government decision is interpreted in Argentina. HMS Endurance is the sole Royal Navy presence in the South Atlantic and, even though her two guns and



A cartoon published in London's New Standard

two armed helicopters can only offer a token resistance, her White Ensign has a calming effect and has up until now emphasised that Britain still meant business in the area.

Her withdrawal is taken to be an indication that Britain will be less committed in future to the Falkland Islands and the South Atlantic.

Falklands fears

From the Secretary to the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee

Sir, I refer to Sir Edmund Irving and Sir Vivian Fuchs's recent letter (October 26) regarding HMS Endurance. Whilst agreeing with their arguments, another urgent reason to retain the ship is that it acts as guardship for the Falkland Islands and provides a Royal Naval presence in the South Atlantic.

Its planned withdrawal has been heralded in the Argentine press as an indication that Britain lacks real interest in the Antarctic and the Falkland Islands; it is interpreted by the patriotic Falkland Islanders as another sign that they are quietly being deserted.

It would seem that the Government are prepared to sacrifice the potential wealth of Antarctica in order to rid themselves of her Majesty's most loyal possession.

Yours truly,
B. G. FROW, Secretary,
United Kingdom Falkland Islands
Committee,
Falkland Islands Office,
2 Greycoat Place,
Westminster, SW1.
October 27.

One of a number of letters published by The Times protesting at the withdrawal of HMS ENDURANCE.

A spokesman at the Ministry of Defence (Sales) said: "No decision had been taken as yet on the disposal of the vessel." There have been press reports that the Australians and Brazilians have expressed an interest in HMS Endurance, which is specially fitted for Antarctic patrol work.

Second Class Citizens

The British Government, by successfully blocking every attempt to modify the Nationality Bill in favour of Falkland Islanders who do not have grandparents born in the United Kingdom, has forced some 300 or so to accept second class citizenship. This gives them no right of abode and employment in the United Kingdom. The story of the campaign is told below, but the battle is not yet lost, in Parliament or elsewhere.

The campaign started with a letter to *The Times*, stating the Islanders case and signed by Sir John Lapsley, Captain P. Vincent and Mr. Lionel Daille, all Falkland Island supporters in Britain.

As reported in the June Newsletter, Mr Michael Shersby MP put down an amendment at the Report Stage of the Nationality Bill which proposed to give Falkland Islanders the same status as the Channel Islanders. This was defeated.

When the Bill reached the House of Lords, an amendment was put down on similar lines by Baroness Vickers with all-party support. This was later withdrawn as the debate took place, on July 28th, the night before the Royal Wedding and the House was not well-attended. On October 7th, Baroness Vickers reintroduced the amendment. After a debate which lasted over an hour the vote was 90 'contents' and 90 'non-contents', an almost unprecedented occurrence in the House of Lords. Under standing orders, a casting vote from the Chair disagreed the amendment.

A new clause which sought to give adequate safeguards to citizens of the Falkland Islands, without leaving loopholes, was moved by Lady Vickers.

The clause sought to give British citizenship to any person who at present is a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies and is ordinarily resident in, or one of whose parents was settled in, the Falkland Islands, and also to other residents of the Falklands.

Lady Vickers said that the Falkland Islanders were people who had come from the United Kingdom and knew no other language than English. There had been no indigenous population when the first British settlers arrived in 1873.

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The Falkland Islanders had no connexion with any other country. She could not understand why they should have treatment different from that given to the Channel Islanders, many of whom were of French descent.

Lady Trumpington (C) said that the Government had taken the view that it would be invidious to devise special citizenship for some dependencies and not for others. Special rights for some would create the very anomalies the Bill was designed to erase.

Lord Lloyd of Kilgerran (L), supporting the amendment, said that it was a situation where no danger arose from vast numbers infiltrating the country.

Lord Trefgarne, Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said the Government shared concern for the welfare of the people of the Falkland Islands, but could not accept the amendment.

It would have no effect on the status under the new Act of the majority of people of the Falkland Islands who would be British citizens anyway because they were within the proscribed relationships within the United Kingdom. Secondly, it would make a minority of a few hundred peoples of the Falkland Islands British citizens at commencement as well as citizens of the British dependent territories.

It would allow transmission of British citizenship indefinitely through the generations in the Falkland Islands, something not enjoyed by British citizens in any other dependency or country.

If accepted, it would lead to great bitterness and resentment in other dependent territories resulting in pressure for concessions which if met would jeopardize the whole basis of the Bill.

The amendment was declared lost after 90 peers voted for it and 90 against. Under standing orders, no proposal to amend a Bill can be agreed unless there is a majority in favour.

THE TIMES

The Bill went back to the Commons towards the close of the Parliamentary session and Mr Shersby put an amendment to give Islanders the same status as the Gibraltarians who had won their amendment in the House of Lords on the basis of the imminent Spanish membership of the European Community. However, the Falkland Islands amendment was not called during the proceedings and when Mr Shersby tried to raise it, he was ruled out of order.

During the whole uncertain period much work was done on behalf of Falkland Islanders both in Parliament and outside and support was widespread in Parliament, the media and amongst the public.

Media coverage increases

After a favourable public response to an excellent television documentary about the Falkland Islands screened in May, the BBC gave a repeat showing on November 2nd on their *Pebble Mill at One* programme. It was followed by a live studio discussion between Sir Vivian Fuchs, Ex-Governor Parker and Air Commodore Frow, Director General of the Falkland Islands Office. The film was part of a series of five films shown during October and November about Argentina, the Falkland Islands and the Antarctic.

Anglia television followed up Cindy Buxton's *Survival* programme shown at Christmas with a documentary about the political issues facing the Falkland Islands, called *More British than the British* and it was screened on Sunday



A 'still' from the Anglia TV documentary *MORE BRITISH THAN THE BRITISH*.

October 25th at 11.20p.m. on most independent networks. The programme received some very good reviews; the only criticism was of the late hour.

Air Commodore Frow has done several radio interviews; for BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio Wales, the BBC World Service and independent radio.

Coverage in the national and provincial press has been extensive, including a feature article in the *Sunday Telegraph Magazine*.

Islands Election Results

In the recent election for the Falkland Islands Legislative Council the following were elected members:

- Stanley – Mr. Terry Peck, Ex-Head of Police
- Stanley West – Mr. John Cheek, Local Falkland Islands Committee Member
- Stanley East – Mr. Bill Goss, Ex-manager of Port Stephen Camp
- Mr. Tony Blake, New Zealander, manager of North Arm
- West Falkland – Mr. Tim Blake, Manager of Hill Cove
- East Falkland – Mr. Ron Binnie, Manager of Fitzroy.

The Legislative Council consists of two ex-officio members (the Chief Secretary and the Financial Secretary) and six elected members, all chaired by the Governor.

'Calling the Falklands' is safe

The popular BBC radio programme which is broadcast from London every Sunday has not been affected by the recent cutbacks in the BBC World Service. This news will be warmly received in the Islands, as the programme provides an important link between Falkland Islanders and their friends and relations in the United Kingdom.

Miss Kathleen Cheesmond, who has presented the show for some years has been moved temporarily to another department at the BBC, but she will be back on 'Calling the Falklands' in March. In her absence Mr Dan Zerdin is presenting the programme of records and commentary. He told the *Newsletter* "requests are always welcome."

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FALKLAND ISLANDS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

I note a disappointing lapse in payment of subscriptions. The high cost of postage now precludes regular reminders to defaulters. I shall be greatly obliged if on reading this you will kindly check the date of your last payment and, if necessary, send me your subscription. The most satisfactory method of payment for subscriptions is by Banker's Order. This obviates relying upon one's memory. I would remind Members that the current terms are:

Full Voting - Annual

Subscription £10.00

Corporate Subscription -

Companies and Trading

Organisations £10.00 Minimum

Husbands and wives may join under joint names, but have only one vote for each subscription.

Any lesser amounts would be welcome and all subscribers will receive the *Newsletter*.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Les Taylor

Honorary Subscriptions Secretary

BATTLE DAY IN LONDON

This year, the annual remembrance ceremony for the Battle of the Falklands will take place on Saturday 12th December at the cenotaph in Whitehall. Wreaths will be laid this year by Miss Marion Macleod, Major R. Spafford and Mr. Les Taylor. The ceremony will be followed by an informal meeting at 16 Regency Street, London, S.W.1. A buffet lunch will be served. Anyone wishing to attend must apply to this office. The cost of the lunches will be £4.00 per head.

RECEPTION 1982

The annual reception for visiting Falkland Islanders and their UK supporters will be held on Thursday 17th June 1982 at the Great Hall, Lincoln's Inn.

The band of HM Royal Marines will Beat Retreat.

Application forms for tickets will be available nearer the date.

Sales

The following items may be purchased from the Falkland Islands Office:

- T-Shirts. Coloured Falkland Islands crest or "Keep the Falkland Islands British" slogan. S, M, L, £3.00; children's sizes - slogan only - 24/26/28 inch, £2.50.
- Head Squares. Blue polyester with crest, £2.00.
- Ties. Dark blue polyester with crest, £2.50.
- Cloth Yachting Caps. Various colours with penguin motif, one size, 70p.
- Tweed Skirt Lengths. Falkland Islands tweed, various colours, £8.00.
- Greetings Cards. With colour picture of Royal Marine Band Beating Retreat, 12p.
- New coloured maps of the Falkland Islands (illustrated), £2.50.
- 1982 pictorial calendars of the Falkland Islands (6 colour photographs), £2.50.

THE FRIENDS OF THE FALKLANDS

I recently circulated all listed Friends explaining that due to altered circumstances we can no longer enjoy the gratuitous facility whereby the Falkland Islands Co. London, despatched correspondence, Newsletters etc. to members and that, in future, this would be dealt with by the Falkland Islands Office at Greycoat Place, and by myself in particular. At this juncture I would like to place on record our very grateful thanks in particular to Mrs. Susan Blake for her original and continued interest in the Friends and to Mr. F. G. Mitchell for his, as always, assiduous collaboration on all aspects affecting members and the cause in which they are concerned.

As those to whom I have written will have noted, the records now in my possession are sometimes at variance regarding names, addresses, titles etc. If these differ from that upon the envelope sent you, please be good enough to let me have the correct details at your early convenience. I also referred to subscriptions. This is inevitable. The ever-increasing costs of campaigning on behalf of the Colony must be shared by all who have any interest in its future well being and we would welcome regular subscriptions or donations. We know that there are very many people, perhaps not intimately concerned with the Islands as are most Friends, but who champion the Islanders desire to remain British. In this context please be good enough to make us known by passing on this Newsletter or giving our name and address to anyone you think may be sufficiently interested to come to our aid.

Les Taylor